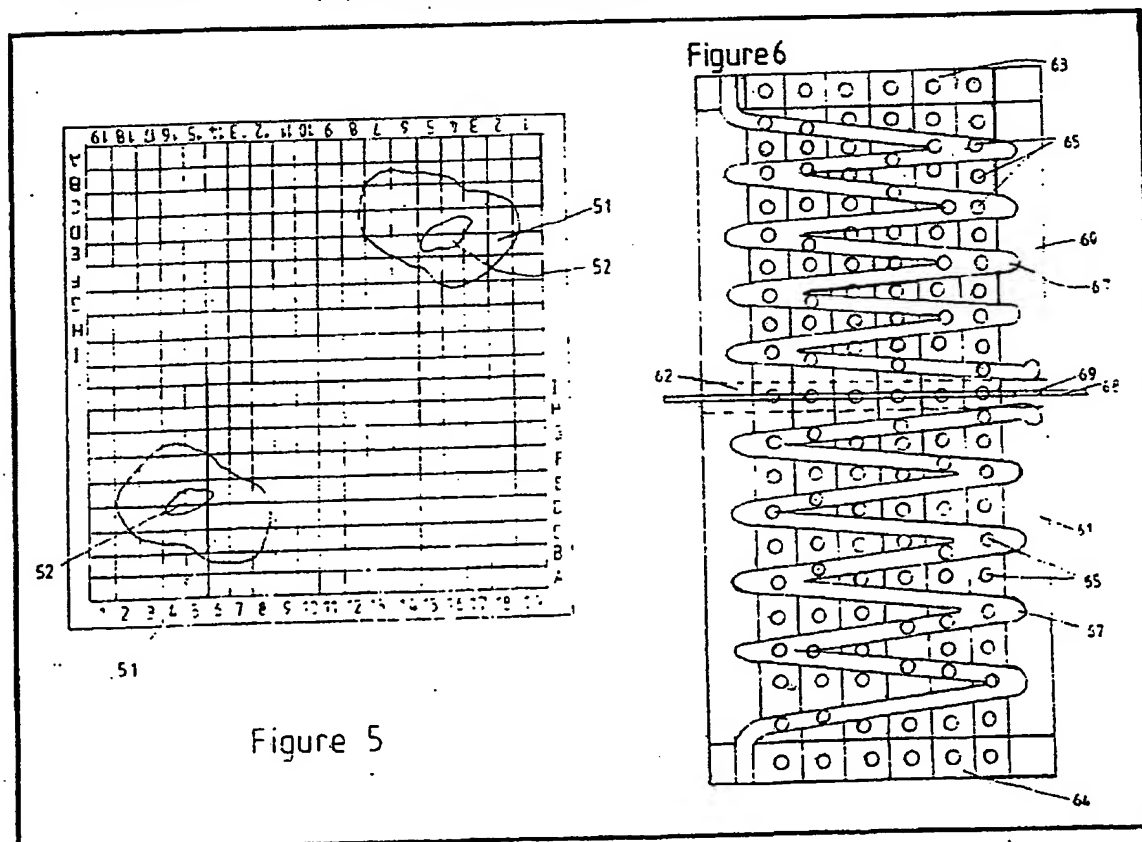


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| GB 587458 | W A Richards |
| GB 584651 | |
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| GB 224182 | |
| US 4052068 A | (57) A board game comprises a |

board having patterned field parts of which can be identified by players so as to permit pieces to be moved from one part to another in accordance with dice throws by one player, the status of such pieces being affected by some other kind of action taken by the other player.

The other action referred to may be the previous placement of a hazard 51, 52. Fig. 5, on a part of the board, or it may be the firing or releasing of a projectile (37) from a ballista, the rolling of a ball down one of two tracks 67, Fig. 6, separated by a screen 68 or the operation of one of two electronic key-boards to affect a screen display of the board.



GB 2016 283 A

1/6

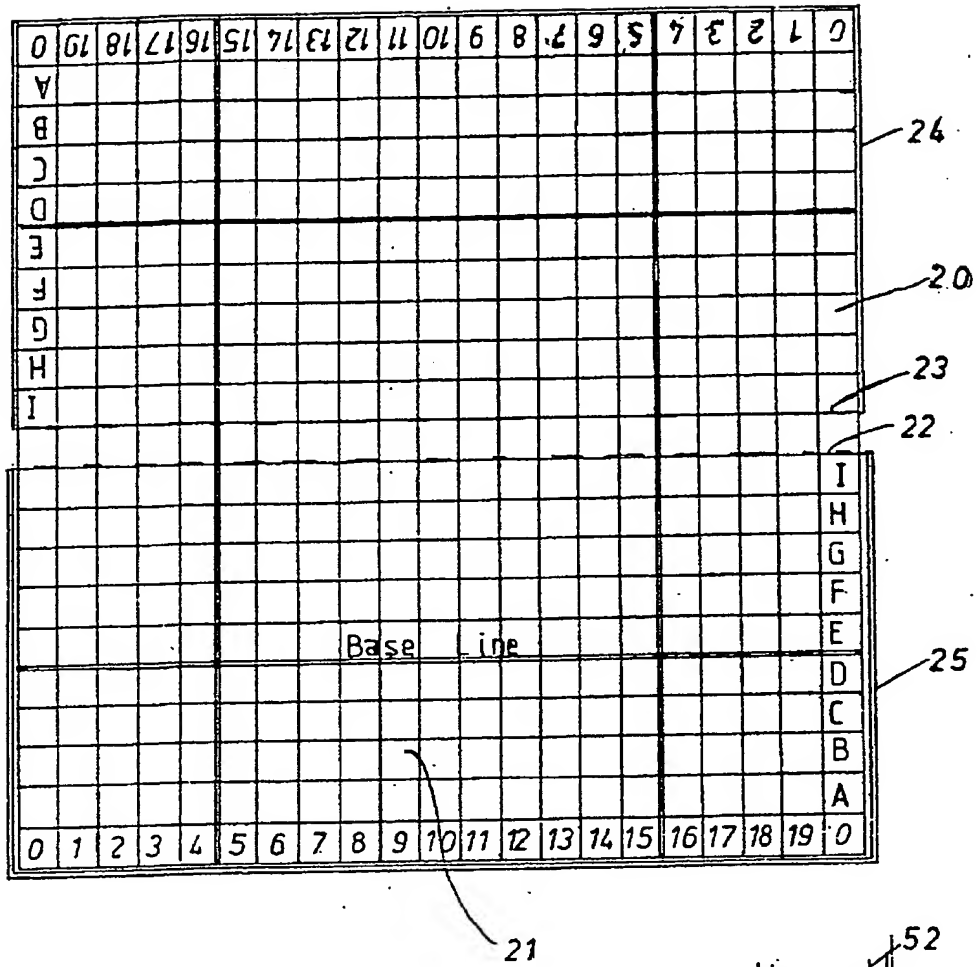


Figure1

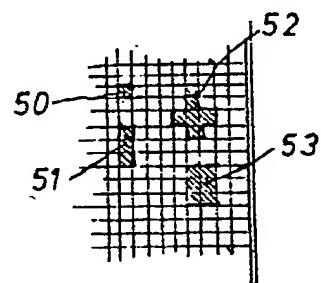


Figure1A

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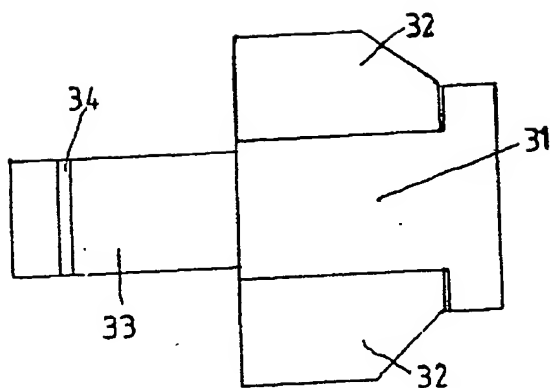


Figure 3

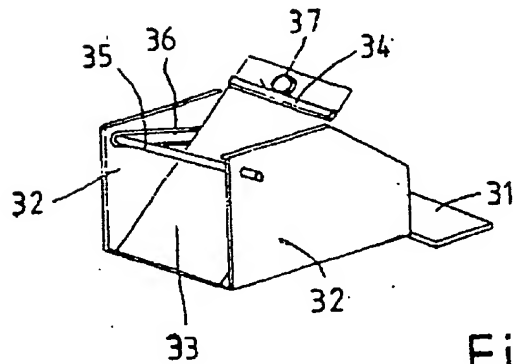


Figure 2

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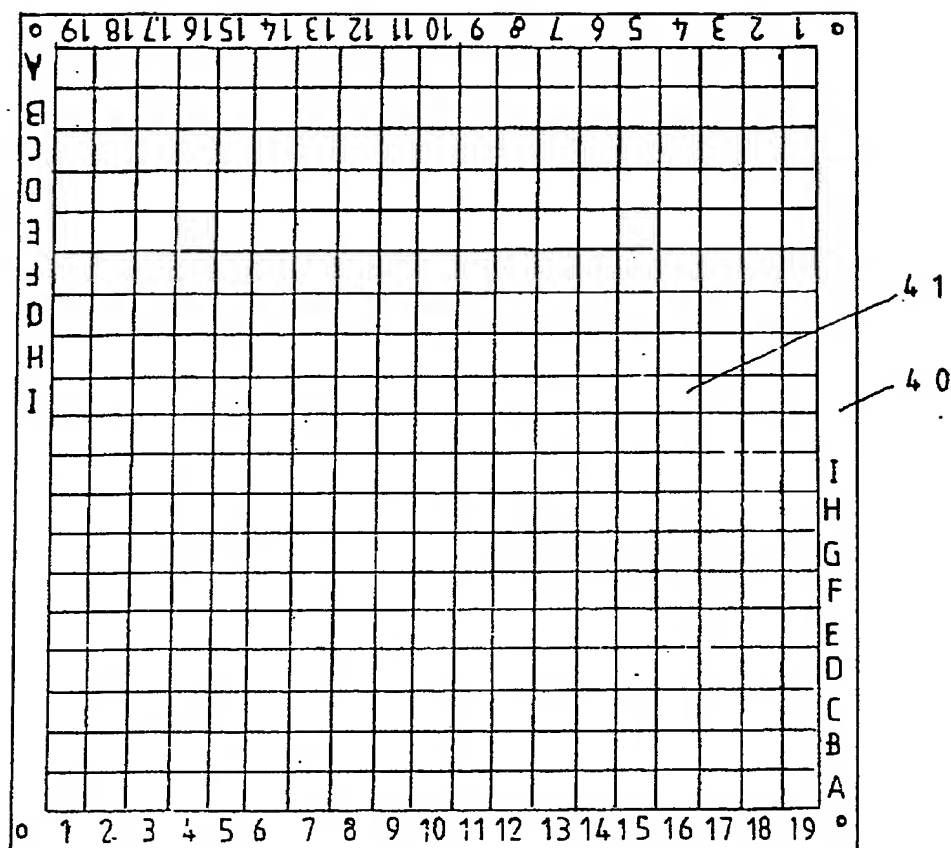


Figure 4

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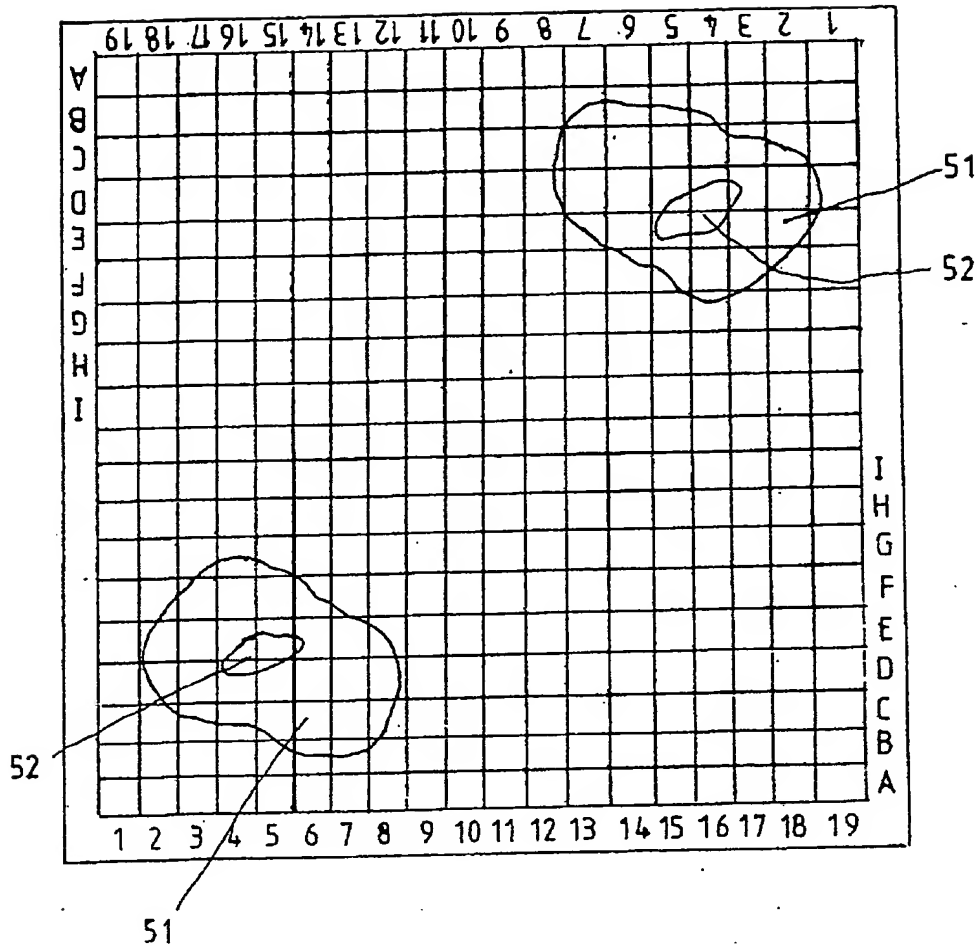
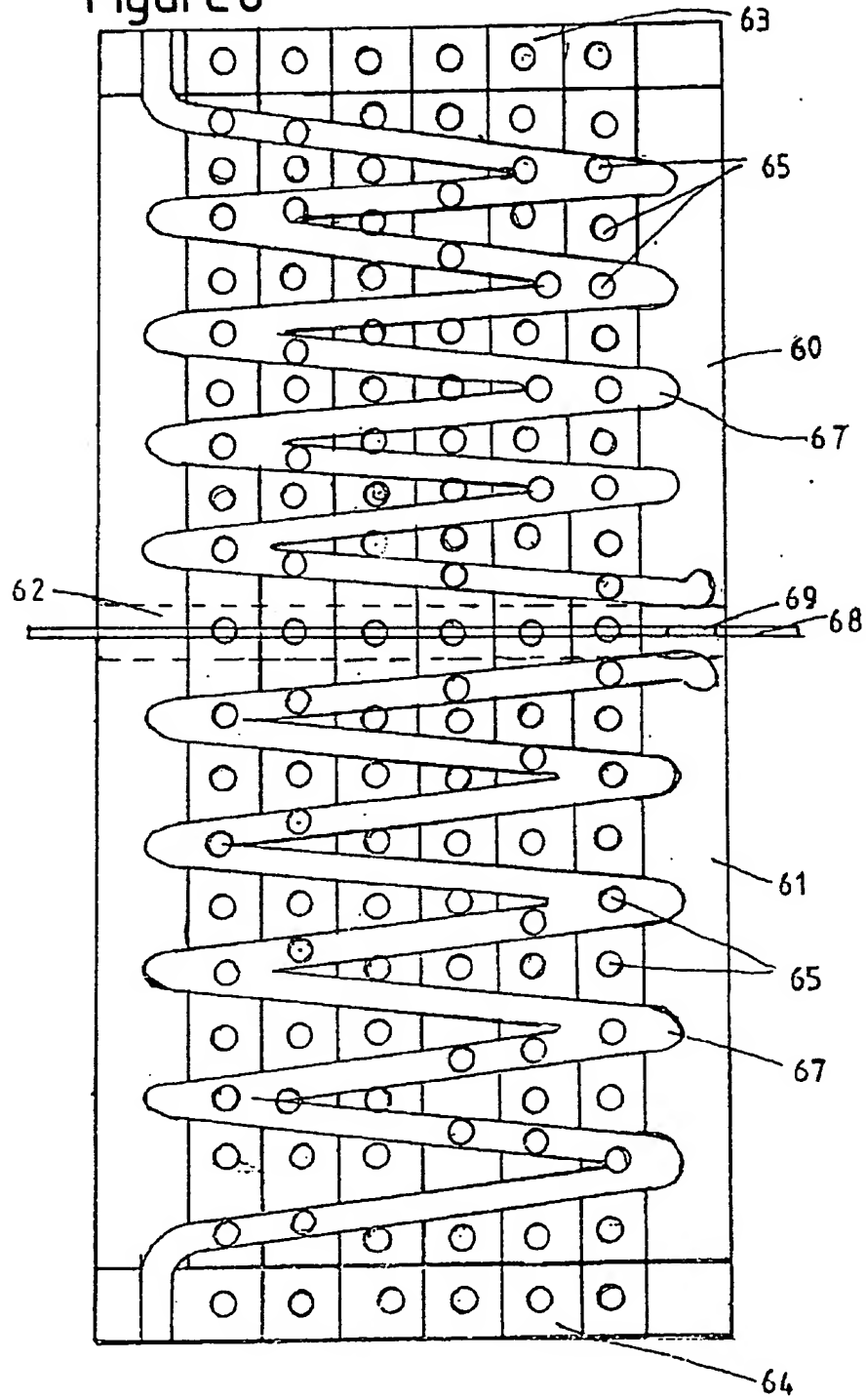


Figure 5

5/6

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Figure 6



6/6

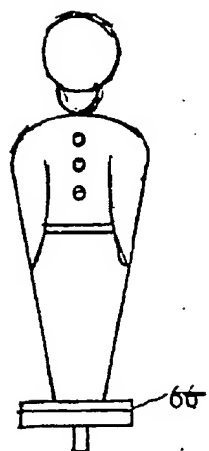


Figure 7

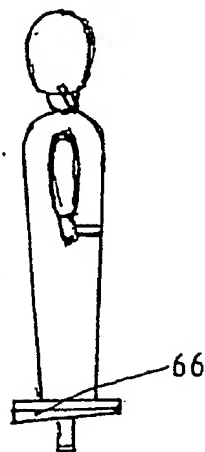


Figure 8

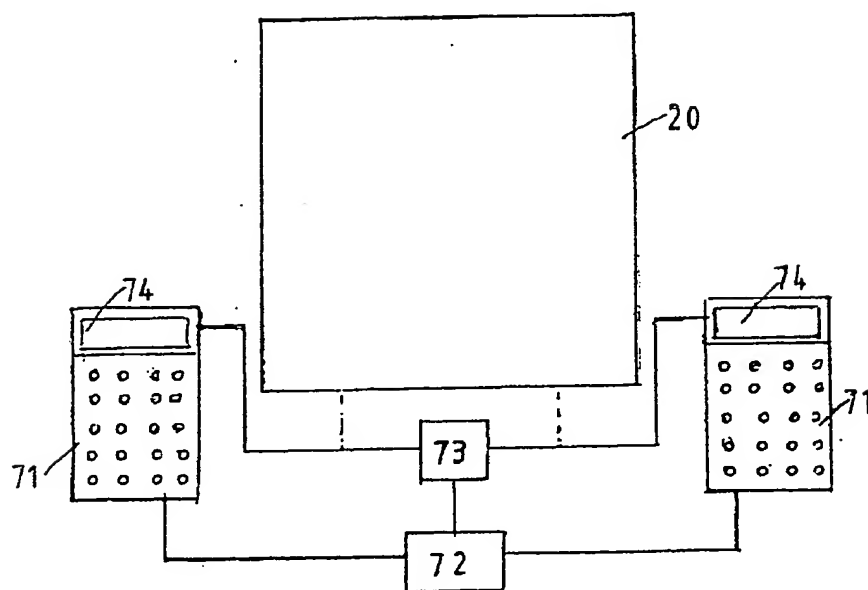


Figure 9

SPECIFICATION

Game

- 5 This invention relates to a novel concept of board games. In the past board games have been mainly of two kinds, those in which movement of the pieces is directly under the control of the players as in chess, and those
- 10 in which movement of the pieces is determined predominantly by chance as in ludo. The invention aims to provide a game in which there is a combination of these factors or a series of games in which such combination can be varied as to the relative strength
- 15 of the factors.

- According to one aspect of the invention a board game comprises a patterned field, parts of which can be identified by the players so as
- 20 to permit pieces to be moved from one such part to another in accordance with chance acquisition of a score by the appropriate player, the status of such pieces or of their player being affected by some other kind of action
- 25 taken by the other player.

- In one form of the invention the action taken by the other player is physical and consists of firing or release of some form of projectile, the aim or the timing of which can
- 30 affect the opposing player's piece or pieces when a strike is made. The projectile may be physically projected, as outlined above, or it may be notionally projected, for example by selection of co-ordinates on the board where it
- 35 may be electrically indicated or made effective.

- In an alternative form of the invention the action taken by the other player is of a more general nature and may consist of making
- 40 areas of the board of his own choosing subject to some advantage or disadvantage, so that for example a player's piece that lands in such an area attracts for its player either a penalty or a benefit. The area to be affected in
- 45 this way may be defined by the placement of a physical shape, for example a representation of some feature such as a bog or a mountain, or it may take a form in which it is not capable of being observed by the other player,
- 50 for example the chosen area of the board may be rendered different in some unseen way as by applying to it a magnetic or electric field, or energisation of co-ordinate cross wires to identify a number of points defining the area,
- 55 such that when a piece lands on part of the chosen area some indication is given that it is a part of the area affected. It is possible for the game to be played electronically, as by using a keyboard to identify parts of the
- 60 playing area, e.g. by co-ordinates or unique numbers, the outputs of the keyboard being entered into a memory or register where they can be compared with information corresponding to the areas referred to above,
- 65 whereupon suitable circuits can be energised

to indicate the results of such comparison. The indicator may be separate or the playing board itself may be used as the indicator, e.g. by causing the relevant area to be illuminated

70 in a colour appropriate to the result of the comparison.

- The invention can offer a novel combination of skill and chance by providing that the status of pieces belonging to one player can
- 75 be affected by projectiles released from a projectile firing device operated by the other player.

- The projectile firing device may take any suitable form but preferably is in the form of
- 80 some kind of ballista, that is to say, a device in which a projectile is launched into a trajectory by release of a previously tensioned spring. The projectiles themselves may be simple discs of some heavy material such as
- 85 type metal, or they may be modelled on some more complex original such as a rocket or torpedo, according to the nature of the game that is to be played. In some cases the ballista may be dispensed with and a model such as
- 90 of a military vehicle or even a simple ball released to run by gravity down the playing board which in this case is arranged to slope.

- In a preferred form of the invention the movement of pieces on the board is determined by the throw of a die or dice, the score of which may be taken by the player who has
- 95 cast it to secure corresponding moves of his pieces or to take shots with the projectile to attack the pieces of the other player. Alternatively he may divide up the score so as to
- 100 choose a combination of movement of pieces and attack by projectile. Furthermore the element of chance may be reduced, if desired, by arranging for the players to take equal
- 105 scores by turn rather than throwing dice.

- Although the basis of the game is a form of battle played on a flat board, additional dimensions can be added by providing further surfaces above or below the board to simulate
- 110 additional fields of combat, such as the sky for aerial warfare and the sea for submarine warfare.

- As mentioned the board may be arranged to be sloping and the projectile arranged to
- 115 move over the board by gravity. For example, it may be a model vehicle such as of a military tank or armoured car, or it may be simply a heavy ball which when released from the top of the board follows a predetermined
- 120 track down the board. In either case pieces struck by the projectile are eliminated from the game, or at least imbued with some special characteristic such as limited mobility.

- The game may be played with sets of
- 125 pieces provided with it, but it also lends itself to substitution, within the framework of the broad set of rules, of other pieces which may be chosen by the owner of the basic board and to which specific rules of his own devis-
- 130 ing may attach.

The board is preferably divided evenly into squares which are identifiable by coordinates that are numbered and lettered or are numbered serially, and has an area marked off on opposing sides to contain the pieces at the start of the game.

The game is subject to the following basic rules, although additional more detailed rules may be included:-

1. Each player shall start with a set of pieces corresponding in number and type to those of the other player or players.
 2. At the start of the game each player shall have his set of pieces contained within his own starting area.
 3. The players shall take turns to move pieces a number of times per turn which is fixed or is dependent on a number determined by chance.
 4. The player taking a turn shall decide how to apportion his score between moving his pieces on the board and releasing projectiles at the pieces of his opponent.
 5. A piece shall be eliminated or imbued with some special characteristic by the act of another piece or a projectile striking it or landing on the square it occupies.
 6. The game shall be won by the player who eliminates all the pieces of the opposing player or players, or secures a submission.
- The game may be played by two, three or four players acting individually if desired, and in the case of more than two players one or more sets of pieces will be moving across the board, initially at least, in directions at right angles.

The board may be provided with sides so that it can fold to form a box to contain the pieces and any other material necessary for playing the game, and the ballista may be made so that it can be folded to fit in the box.

The above and other possible refinements of the invention will be made clear from the following description of examples of the game, reference being made to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Figure 1 is a plan view of a board employed in a game according to the invention,

Figure 1A is a detail of part of Fig. 1,

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a projectile firing device,

Figure 3 is a plan view of a blank of sheet material from which the device of Fig. 2 may be constructed by folding,

Figure 4 is a plan view of an accessory for extending the game,

Figure 5 is a plan view of a further accessory,

Figure 6 is a plan view of a board employed in a simplified form of the game,

Figure 7 is a front elevation of a piece used in the game of Fig. 6.

Figure 8 is a side elevation of the piece of Fig. 7, and

Figure 9 is a block diagram of an electronic

version of the game of Fig. 1.

Referring first to Figs. 1 to 5, a board 20 is divided into twentyone squares in each direction and each half of the board is numbered along the base and lettered up one side so as to provide coordinate points that may be uniquely identified by a letter and a number reference.

Each player has a number of pieces which at the start of the game occupy squares in the hatched area designated 21, the corners of which are defined by the squares A5, D5, A15 and D15. However if there are only two players these areas may be extended to the edges of the board. There is thus space for fortyfour pieces on each side, although fewer pieces than this may be used if desired.

The pieces may conveniently be chosen from a series such as that sold by Airfix Limited as miniature toy soldiers and military equipment. These are small enough to enable the size of the board to be kept down to about eighteen inches square. Alternatively, the game may be played pieces of simple but differing shape. Thus, as shown in Fig. 1A, a foot soldier may be a simple square as at 50, a horseman may be an oblong covering three squares as at 51, a gun may be a cross covering five squares as at 52, a tank may cover six squares as at 53 and so on.

The game is played as previously described but many variations are possible within the broad framework. For example, special pieces such as tanks or personnel carriers may be assigned special moves rather in the way that chess men have moves peculiar to the particular piece.

A projectile firing device for use in the game is shown in Fig. 2 and consists essentially of a base 31 with integral sides 32 and a hinged flap 33 all folded from a single sheet shown in plan in Fig. 3. A bar 34 is provided which is glued to the face of the flap 3 to create a ledge on which a projectile may rest. The device is completed by a rod 35 located in holes in the sides 32 and an elastic band 36 which is passed around the back of the flap 33 with the rod 35 passing through its ends. A projectile 37, which may be a small disc of lead or type metal, is placed on the flap 33 above the bar 35 and the flap is drawn down and let go, whereupon the elastic band 36 causes it to hurl the projectile forward.

In a particular example of the game which is termed CONFLICT the instructions are as follows:-

CONFLICT

CONFLICT is a game of war; the aim of each player is to move up the board capturing or destroying his opponent's forces until he is forced to surrender.

Each player has 40 pieces, which he can place as he wishes behind the base line.

Two dice are provided, and their total score when thrown is doubled. Two minefields are provided and must not be crossed in any circumstances. Two Keep Clear squares are also provided and must not be passed over. Twenty Fate squares are provided for division evenly between the players. One ballista and 50 shots are also provided for each player.

10 Rules.

Each player may place his minefield anywhere covering three squares on his side of the board, the centre line of squares across the board being unavailable to anyone. Each player may place his Keep Clear anywhere covering four squares on his side of the board.

The twenty Fate squares are divided evenly between the players, each of whom may place them on any squares on his side of the board, silver side up. Six Fate Cards are included numbered 1 to 6, and the appropriate card is chosen for the particular game by throwing one die and selecting the card bearing its number. The Fate Cards are kept face downwards except when being consulted by a player one of whose pieces has landed on or passed over a Fate Square on the board and who has to comply with the instructions on the card.

Each player in turn throws the two dice and his total score is doubled. He may elect to move pieces or take shots with the Ballista instead. Thus if he throws dice adding up to a total of 10, his score is doubled, i.e. 20, and he might elect to move twenty of his pieces one square forward, or one piece twenty squares forward, or move three pieces five squares forward and take five shots with the Ballista for the remaining five of his score.

If larger pieces, such as tanks or guns, are used a gun is counted as covering 5 squares and a tank 6 squares, and should any of these in moving forward pass over or between two fate squares the one on the player's left hand is turned over first, then the one on the right and the appropriate Fate Card in use is consulted. However, if the square turned over is a Land-mine or a Mine, the piece is deemed destroyed and taken from the board, otherwise the instructions for the left hand square are carried out first; then the one on the right. After this the player completes his move but if destroyed his turn is deemed to be finished.

Players may only move forward or sideways; they may not retreat. On reaching the opponent's Base Line they may then move sideways or forward or backward, but not diagonally.

Any shots must be taken from behind the outer edge of the box, and should one player's piece or projectile land on a square already occupied the previous occupant is deemed captured and removed.

The game may be further elaborated by the

use of a transparent replica of the board, as shown in Fig. 4, which consists of a frame 40 provided with a hole at each corner so that it can be supported at a different level from the board 20 by means of posts (not shown). The frame 40 carries a transparent sheet 41 which is marked in squares corresponding to those of the board 20. The squares of the sheet 41 are identifiable by reference numerals and letters on the frame 40 corresponding to those of the board 20.

The sheet 41 may thus be used to extend the game into a third dimension so as to provide air warfare and support and attack of ground formations.

A further extension of the game may be provided by a transparent sheet such as is shown in Fig. 5 which is simply laid on and carries coloured or raised areas 51 which may represent hills or other topographical features, and other areas 52 which are coloured to represent minefields or the like. The areas 51 and 52 are applied equally to opposite sides of the board.

The board shown in Fig. 1 is arranged to fold along the two lines 22 and 23 and is provided with upstanding edges 24 and 25, the former being arranged to fit within the latter when the board is folded.

A form of the game which is especially suitable for young children is shown in Figs. 6, 7 and 8. In Fig. 6 a board is shown which comprises two sloping surfaces 60, 61, which meet at a summit 62 which is the goal to be attained by opposing players who each start with pieces in the respective starting areas 63, 64. The pieces may be toy soldiers of the turned wooden variety as shown in Figs. 7 and 8, each having a peg for engaging the holes 65 in the board and having a base 66 which slopes as shown to correspond with the slope of the board. The pieces are advanced up the two slopes in accordance with the alternate casting of dice by the opposing players, and in suitable circumstances, e.g. by throwing a double six, each player has the opportunity of releasing a projectile in the form of a heavy metal ball from the goal area 62, so as to roll in a groove 67 down his opponent's slope. Any of his opponent's pieces that are struck by the ball are then eliminated from the game. The opponent's slope may, if desired, be obscured by a screen 68 which has a small hole corresponding to the starting position 69 of the balls.

The various forms of the game may be played if desired by electronic means, as shown in Fig. 9 where a keyboard 71 is provided for each player by which he can key unique identifications, e.g. by letter and number co-ordinates, for the areas of the board where he wishes his pieces to proceed. This information is transferred to a register 72 from which it proceeds to a comparator 73 where it is compared with information corre-

sponding to prohibited or danger areas which has previously been keyed in or with other suitable programmed information. The results of the comparison may be shown on indicators 74 associated with the keyboards as shown, or may be applied to the board itself, the appropriate areas being illuminated to indicate, for example, that a square chosen is unavailable or subject to a penalty like elimination of the piece in question.

CLAIMS

1. A board game comprising a board having a patterned field, parts of which can be identified by the players so as to permit pieces to be moved from one such part to another in accordance with chance acquisition of a score by the appropriate player, the status of such pieces or of their player being affected by some other kind of action taken by the other player.

2. A board game according to claim 1, wherein the action taken by the other player is physical and consists of firing or release of some kind of projectile, the aim or the timing of which can affect the status of the opposing player or his piece or pieces when a strike is made.

3. Board game according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein an area can be chosen by one of the players to be designated a hazard area.

4. A board game according to claim 3, wherein the hazard area is identified in a way which makes it apparent to both players.

5. A board game according to claim 3, wherein the hazard area is identified in a way in which it is not visually apparent to one of the players.

6. A board game according to any one of claims 2 to 5, wherein the board is sloping and the projectile is in the form of a device movable by gravity from one part of the board to another.

7. A board game according to any one of claims 2 to 5, wherein the projectile is launched by means of a device resembling a mediaeval military ballista.

8. A games system for board games employing a board as defined in any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein there are provided offensive pieces and obstructive pieces, the latter being either active or passive as far as offensive pieces are concerned, and the rules being such that the position of obstructive pieces on the board may be determined by the players.

9. A board game or system according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein moves made by the players are encoded by a keyboard encoder, signals from which are fed to a register.

10. A board game or system according to claim 9, wherein the register translates signals and transmits them to one or more displays to

indicate the moves chosen by the players.

11. A board game or system according to claim 10, wherein a hazard area of the board chosen by one of the players is fed in encoded form to the register but is not displayed to the other player.

12. A board game or system according to claim 11, wherein signals representative of said hazard area are fed to a comparator where they are compared with signals corresponding to a move to be made by the other player, and an output results indicating to said other player that said move is not permissible or is subject to a penalty.

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